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博 士 学 位 论 文

词典使用与英语词汇学习

—— 中国英语专业学生使用双解词典之实证研究

Dictionary Use and EFL Vocabulary Learning:

An Empirical Research of English Majors' Use of Bilingualized

Dictionaries in China

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Abstract

English-Chinese bilingualized learners' dictionaries are hugely popular with tertiary-level Chinese EFL students. However, this type of dictionary has drawn little attention from scholars of dictionary use studies in China. This research aims to investigate the use and usefulness of bilingualized dictionaries (BLDs) for vocabulary learning. It consists of four independent yet interrelated studies, each of which focuses on one of the following areas:

1. the general use of BLDs in daily learning settings and users' perceptions and needs,
2. the effectiveness of BLD use for vocabulary learning in reading context,
3. the effectiveness of BLD use for vocabulary learning in sentence context, and
4. the lookup behavior of BLD users and its impact on vocabulary learning in CALL context.

In addition to the above-mentioned research topics, the author also intends to look into the following aspects of BLD use which are integrated into most of the four studies:

5. the differences between BLDs of different media, i.e. paper version vs. electronic form in terms of general use and evaluation and also in terms of their effectiveness for vocabulary learning; and
6. the differences between BLD users at different levels of vocabulary proficiency with regard to dictionary use and vocabulary learning outcomes.

Participants of the research are undergraduate English majors from several universities in Fujian province. Different methods were adopted for different studies.

The first study is a questionnaire survey aiming to find out how BLDs are usually used in daily learning settings, how they are perceived and evaluated by students, what are the differences between BLDs of different media and what are the needs of BLD users. As a foundation for the subsequent studies of the research, the first study confirms the popularity of BLDs and the wide and favorable recognition they have gained. It also yielded some assumptions and claims that formed hypotheses of the subsequent studies and were later supported or refuted by further empirical evidence.

The second study explores the role of BLD use in L2 vocabulary learning in reading context. Students engaged in a reading task were divided into three groups under different reading conditions: with the aid of a desktop electronic BLD, a print BLD of the same version, or without access to the dictionary. After the task completion, an unexpected retention test was conducted requesting the students to recall the meaning of the target words imbedded in the reading text. A week later, the same retention test was done again. It is found that BLD use can effectively facilitate vocabulary comprehension and enhance incidental vocabulary acquisition. There is no significant difference between the print and the electronic BLDs in their usefulness for vocabulary learning. In other words, the outcomes of vocabulary learning are not dependent on the form of BLDs. Nevertheless, the electronic BLD shows some superiority over the print one in its effectiveness for vocabulary retention. Students varying on vocabulary proficiency levels and reading conditions fare differently on incidental vocabulary acquisition.

The third study involves comparisons between a BLD and two dictionaries of other types, one bilingual, the other monolingual. Students were given a list of ten target words, each of which was involved in a definition-selection task, a sentence-translation task and a sentence-writing task, and instructed to finish the tasks with the aid of one of the three dictionaries mentioned above. After the task completion, without advance notice, they were given retention tests about the target words, including a form-recognition test, a meaning-recognition test and a meaning-recall test, the latter two of which were repeated a week later. The study reveals a clear advantage of the BLD for vocabulary task completion over the other two dictionaries. For vocabulary retention, BLD use also yields substantially better results of meaning-recall tests and it proves to be significantly more effective than the bilingual dictionary for meaning-recognition, although in terms of form recognition, these three dictionary groups do not differ sharply. The study also indicates that students using different dictionary types and varying on vocabulary proficiency levels fare differently on incidental vocabulary acquisition.

The fourth study is concerned with the use of a specially designed CALL program which includes dictionary information of a widely used BLD and materials of a reading task. Ten target words were integrated into the reading text, for which dictionary information was provided. The BLD entry information was split into several components, such as phonetic information & word class, L2 definition, L1

translation, L2 definition + L1 translation, example, and derived words etc. Students' each click on the dictionary information was registered by log files. After the task completion, students were given an unexpected retention test to recall the meaning of the target words. This experimental study explores the language-oriented lookup behavior of BLD users and its impact on vocabulary learning in CALL context. It is found that students' overall language preference is to read both L2 definition and L1 translation in BLD entries; L1 is also used by quite many students and L2 is the least popular option. Different words are consulted with different lookup options and different students follow different lookup patterns. On the whole, the combined use of L2 and L1 information leads to the best results of vocabulary retention. The study also manifests that there is no strong correlation between the amount of dictionary activity and the outcomes of vocabulary learning. Furthermore, students' vocabulary proficiency is not significantly associated with their lookup preference or the amount of dictionary activity, although it is a strong predictor of vocabulary learning outcomes.

As the first large-scale and systematic investigation into BLD use in mainland China, the research presents an interesting and illuminating picture of dictionary use in task-based L2 vocabulary learning. It confirms the positive role the BLD can play for vocabulary task completion and incidental vocabulary acquisition under different learning contexts. It also supports the claim that this type of dictionary can cater to a variety of lookup possibilities and individualized lookup patterns. In addition, the research throws some light on the differences between BLDs in the paper and electronic form and between students at different vocabulary proficiency levels. Furthermore, the author also identified some specific problems with BLD use during vocabulary task completion. The findings of the research are of direct relevance to L2 vocabulary teaching, dictionary use instruction and lexicographic practice.

Key Words: dictionary use; vocabulary learning; bilingualized dictionaries; English majors in China

摘 要

英汉学习型双解词典一直深受国内高校英语学习者的喜爱,然而该类词典的使用却很少得到关注。本研究课题的目的是为了调查双解词典的使用情况及其对英语词汇习得的作用。笔者设计了四个独立又相互关联的具体研究,分别探讨以下四个研究重点:

1. 双解词典在日常英语学习中的总体使用情况,使用者的词典评价及需求;
2. 双解词典对阅读语境中词汇学习的使用效果;
3. 双解词典对句子语境中词汇学习的作用;
4. CALL 语境下双解词典的查阅行为及其对词汇习得的影响。

此外,笔者还在这四个具体研究中融入以下研究内容:

5. 纸质双解词典和电子类双解词典的差异,包括对总体使用情况和评价的比较以及对词汇习得的作用对比;
6. 不同词汇水平学生的对比,包括在词典使用方面的差异和词汇习得结果方面的不同。

本研究课题的所有参与者均来自省内不同高校的英语专业本科生。不同的研究采用不同的研究方法。

第一项研究是问卷调查,目的是为了调查双解词典在英语学习中的总体使用情况,学生对该类词典的看法和评价,不同媒介的双解词典在使用和评价方面的差异,以及词典使用者的需求。通过调查,证实了双解词典在学生中受到广泛欢迎并获得普遍认可。该项调查为后面的几项研究打下基础,为它们提供了研究假设,并得到实验证据的支持或反驳。

第二项研究主要考察阅读语境下的双解词典使用。学生参与一项阅读任务,并被分成三组,一组使用桌面电子双解词典,一组使用同一版本的纸质双解词典,还有一组不使用任何词典。完成阅读任务后,未经事先通知进行词汇记忆测试,要求写出阅读文章中目标词的意思。一周后再次重复该记忆测试。研究发现,使用双解词典能够有效地辅助词汇理解,增强词汇附带习得的效果。纸质双解词典和电子双解词典对词汇习得的作用并无显著差异,换句话说,词汇学习的结果并

不依赖于所使用词典的媒介。不过,电子双解词典对词汇记忆稍具优势。不同词汇水平不同阅读条件的学生词汇附带习得结果差异显著。

第三项研究涉及到一本双解词典与两本其他类型词典的对比,一本双语词典,另一本单语词典。要求学生利用这三本词典中的一本,对十个目标词进行加工练习,包括定义选择、句子翻译和造句。任务完成后对这些目标词进行记忆测试,包括词形辨认、词义辨认和词义回忆,后两项测试在一周后再次重复。研究发现,在词汇加工任务方面,双解词典具有非常显著的优势。在词义回忆测试中,双解词典明显优于另外两本词典,在词义辨认测试中,双解词典也明显胜过双语词典,虽然这三者在词形辨认方面并无显著差异。研究还发现,不同词汇水平且使用不同类型词典的学生在词汇的附带习得方面差异显著。

第四项研究利用一个特别开发的 CALL 程序,包括一项阅读任务和相关的词典信息。阅读文章包含十个目标词,这些目标词的意思可通过点击相关按钮根据词典视窗进行查阅。所有的词典信息均来自于一本学生普遍使用的双解词典。这本词典的词条信息被分成若干部分,如音标和词性、英语定义、汉语翻译、英语定义+汉语翻译、例证、派生词等。学生所有的词典信息点击情况都被记录起来。完成任务后要求学生回忆目标词的意思。该研究揭示了 CALL 语境下双解词典的查阅行为及其对词汇习得的影响。发现学生总体的语言使用偏好是倾向于两种语言同时使用,另外许多学生也喜欢使用汉语,英语则很少单独使用。不同的目标词经常采用不同的语言查阅方式,不同的使用者具有不同的语言查阅习惯。总体上看,两种语言同时使用的查阅方式能带来词汇记忆的最佳效果。此外,词典的点击量与词汇习得的结果之间并无显著相关,学生的词汇水平与其词典查阅习惯和词典点击量之间也没有明显关联,虽然词汇水平与词汇习得结果显著相关。

本课题首次对国内的双解词典使用展开大规模的系统研究,对词汇学习中的词典使用情况进行了有益的探讨,富有启发。证实了双解词典对不同语境下的词汇学习任务和词汇附带习得的积极作用;发现该类词典可满足各种查阅方式和个人查阅习惯;同时也对比了纸质版和电子类双解词典之间的使用效果,探讨了不同词汇水平的学生在词典使用和词汇习得方面的差异。另外,本研究还发现了词汇学习任务过程中存在的一些具体的词典使用问题。本研究课题对二语词汇教学、词典使用教学和词典编纂实践均具有指导意义。

关键词: 词典使用 词汇学习 双解词典 中国英语专业学生

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